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OF HAWKS AND HOUNDS IN IRELAND.

BY JOHN P. PRENDERGAST, ESQ., BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

TIME works such changes, both in the habits of men and in the appearance of a country, that to appreciate the history of former days one must endeavour to transport the mind from the present, and encompass it with the circumstances of the past. In this effort we have not merely to overcome the difficulty arising from "old customs changed, old manners gone," but from such a change in the aspect of the country, that were the actors of former scenes to return, they could scarce recognise their former haunts.

Ireland of old—indeed up to one hundred and fifty years ago—was a thinly peopled country covered (not with large forests, unless in the King's and Queen's Counties, known as Leix, Offally, and Ely O'Carroll, but) with scattered woods and extensive plains.—*Fynes Morryson's Itinerary*, part iii. p. 160. Although without parks of fallow deer—for Sir John Davys (*Discovery*, pp. 124-5) observes, that the earl of Ormonde's park, at Kilkenny, was the only deer-park in Ireland—it abounded in red deer, like those of Scotland or of Kilkenny, which latter are but the relics of herds that roamed over hill and plain in former times. The survivors of this race have retired to the peninsula of Kerry and the wilds of Donegal jutting into the Atlantic, where a few may still be seen in those districts, the most remote from the cultivated haunts of men, and their last foot-hold in this island, so long their peculiar home.

In the emblematic title-page to Sir James Ware's *Antiquities of Ireland*, published so late as the middle of the seventeenth century, Hibernia is represented as a kind of Diana, standing in the foreground of a woody scene, beside her a large deer-hound. In the distance are the deer, and in front a large tree swarming with bees, to indicate that Ireland was celebrated for her deer, her race of gigantic dogs, and for her abundance of wild honey. But her woods also harboured the wolf, and were full of martins in such numbers that lord Strafforde could promise archbishop Laud from out of the woods of Shillelagh, which he had wrung from the Byrns of Wicklow, enough of martins' skins to make a lining for his grace's winter gown.

Let us then imagine ourselves at the distance of some three hundred years from the present, and from the leads of some neighbouring castle survey the scene. Looking down from the parapet, would be seen a green and swelling plain extending from the very walls of the bawn till it reached the neighbouring hills or wood—crossed only by some bridle-paths—and between, at distant intervals, the towers of some neighbouring castle, or the embattled wall and steeple of some abbey, embosomed in trees; or, let it be here in Kilkenny on some hunting morn, from the great tower of the castle. Waiting

outside the great gate would be found the huntsmen and the dogs. In the court of honour Piers earl of Ossory, with a gallant company, getting ready for the field. How unlike the shooting parties and battues of the present day! Fowling-pieces and shot-belts were then unknown, and gun-powder but little used. The long bow and the cross bow were the soldier's arms. As in the old ballad of Robin Hood—

No waring guns were then in use,
They dream't of no such thing;
Our Englishmen in fight did use
The gallant grey-goose wing.

With these, sending their arrows as thick as hail, they conquered at Cressy and Poitiers. In those days they followed the chase with hawk and hound, and with a magnificence of which we should obtain but a poor conception, from even the best equipped trains of the present day. There awaited the earl of Ossory, as we suppose him riding out with all his company from the gate, no less than sixty deer-hounds with their four and twenty huntsmen—for such was the number both of men and dogs used by the earl, as we shall see from an authority subsequently quoted. These deer hounds, no doubt, ran by sight more than scent; and they were held, in twos and threes in leashes, by hunters who were posted at different points to watch and let slip the dogs, as the deer might outrun the dogs first loosed. We can imagine the noise and joyousness of such a train leaving Kilkenny castle, and may, if we like, fancy we hear the earl jesting with his followers in Irish, for then, and long after, our Anglo-Irish nobles used the native tongue. Numerous, however, as was the earl's train, his hunting equipage had not the magnificence of, though it was no doubt more hearty than, those of men of like rank on the Continent and in England.

And this leads one to consider the passion of the feudal nobles for the chase: more especially in France, Germany, and England, where they pursued it with a sumptuousness such as seems never to have been exhibited in Ireland. The extent and origin of their engrossing desire for this sport will be best appreciated by considering, in Monsieur Guizot's manner, in his *History of Civilization in France*, the condition of the feudal proprietor—a condition, he says, which though general in Europe, was probably unknown to all ancient times. He selects his castle, as the type and essence of the feudal system. Those massive walls, contracted chambers, and looped turrets, the parapets, battlements, and advancing barbicans; these were not the whims and caprices of wealth, but the necessity of his condition. He and his brother-adventurers, dwelling each on the property of some native, whom they had deprived of his lands and liberties, dwelt in the midst of dangers. Isolated, and obliged to depend on his own resources, he had need of fosse and tower against the attempts of the conquered race. And what was his life, cooped within this dark and

narrow castle, without books, and without society ! It was wearisome in the extreme—hence the absolute necessity for out-of-door life and enjoyment, and that overwhelming passion for the chase.

It was to gratify this taste that William Rufus turned thirty miles along the southern coast of England, near his royal palace of Winchester, into a hunting forest, dispeopling sixty villages, besides monopolizing the right of sporting over all the kingdom. And when the Norman nobles won the freedom of hunting on their own estates, they considered this liberty as one of the liberties of England, and secured it by the Great Charter; for it was only on the confirmation of Magna Charta by king Henry III., that the clauses relating to the forest were first thrown into a separate charter, making the *Charta de Foresta* (Reeve's *History of the English Law*, c. v. p. 231). Some notion of the strictness with which they had been previously bound, may be obtained from the 9th and 12th chapters, whereby it was first permitted to every freeman to agist his own woods, i. e. to feed his cattle there, and to have liberty to take the eyries of hawks, eagles, and herons found there (*Id.* p. 255). But while they broke up the king's monopoly in favour of themselves, they continued it as regarded those beneath them, and enacted such severe laws, that in the matter just above mentioned they made it felony for any to steal hawks' nests, a statute which was only repealed within the present century. They forbade any under the degree of gentleman to intermeddle with vert or venison; and each Norman baron became after the model of their earlier kings, a little tyrant in his own fief, with his verderers and foresters, as they then called their game-keepers. From the king downwards to the pettiest baron, his hawks and his hounds and his equipage for the chase became the objects of the greatest parade. And so throughout the feudal nobility of Europe.

The rolls of Close Writs, in the Tower of London, afford curious evidence of the taste of our early kings for falconry. Thus (in the 14th year of king John, A. D. 1213), we have the king's writ to the sheriff of Dorsetshire accompanying three gire-falcons sent to be mewed in that county, and directing him to find whatever may be required by Robin de Hauville their keeper, with his horse and man, and to furnish him with young pigeons' and swine's flesh for the gire-falcons, and once a week fowls' flesh; the cost to be accounted to him at the exchequer.¹

With another writ (21st March, 16th king John), the king sends to John Fitz-Hugh, by William de Merc and another, three gire-falcons and "Gibbun the gire-falcon, than which," he adds, "we have no better;" and one falcon-gentle, and directs that they be put in mew and, for their food, be provided with plump goats and occasionally good hens, and once a week with hare's flesh; the cost of their

¹ Printed *Calendar of Close Writs*, in *Tower of London*, p. 118.

keep and the wages of Spark, William de Merc's man, to be repaid at the exchequer.¹

In the following reign, on the 21st September, A.D. 1219 (in the third year of Henry III.), the sheriff of Northampton is ordered to supply with all necessaries Walter de Hauville, during his stay at Northampton, to "ensain" Blakeman the king's gire-falcon, and to make him fly three or four times a week.²

And in the following year the same sheriff is apprised that the king sends Thomas de Weston with his two gire-falcons; namely, Blakeman and the foolish falcon, and three grey-hounds, and Haukinus de Hauville with Le Refuse the king's gire-falcon, and two grey-hounds, who are all to be furnished with necessaries on the king's account.³

It has been remarked as a trait of the manners of the age, that Harold of England is represented in the first scene of the Bayeux tapestry, which describes the events of the conquest, as embarking on his visit to William of Normandy, with a dog under his arm and his hawk on his fist. In like manner it is curious to find, that the first chapter in the history of the conquest of Ireland, opens with a hawking scene. In the contemporary account given by Giraldus Cambrensis, he describes king Henry II., then going on his first visit to Ireland, as weather-bound for some weeks at Pembroke, the scene of the following incident; and it evinces the taste of that age, that so accomplished a writer as Giraldus, and one so familiar with the best authors and best company of the times, should pause to narrate it:—"Whilest the king laie there," says Giraldus, "he had great pleasure in hawking, and as he was walking abroad with a goshawke of Norwaie on his fist, he had espied a falcon sitting upon a rocke; and as he went about the rock to view and behold him, his goshawke hauing also espied the falcon, bated unto him [as they describe the hawk's moving of its head on getting sight of its game] and therewith the king let her flie. The falcon seeing hir selfe thus beset, taketh also wing; and albeit her flight was slow at the first, yet at length she maketh wing and mounteth up of a great height: and taking the aduantage of the goshawke, hir adversarie, commeth down with all hir might, and striking hir she claue hir backe asunder, and fell downe dead at the king's foot: wherat the king and all they that were then present had great maruell. And the king hauing good liking and being in loue with the falcon, did yearlie at the breeding and disclosing time send thither for them: for in all his land there was not a better or more hardie hawk."⁴

Though Ireland never seems to have been cursed with forest or game laws, at least to the extent that England was, our gentry,

¹ Printed *Calendar of Close Writs in Tower of London*, p. 192.

² Printed *Calendar of Close Writs in Tower of London*, p. 400.

³ Printed *Calendar of Close Writs in Tower of London*, p. 412.

⁴ *Giraldus Cambrensis*, Hooker's translation, apud *Holinshed*, book i. chap. xxx.

both native and Anglo-Irish, were ardently attached to the chase. For this they had peculiar advantages in the extent of uninclosed grounds which gave scope for hunting. How extensively they followed it may be inferred from the hunting retinue of the earl of Ossory in the beginning of Henry VIII.'s reign. In 1525 he is accused by the earl of Kildare (who as we shall find did the like himself) of taking coigne and livery of all the king's subjects in the counties of Kilkenny and Tipperary, not only for his horsemen, kerne, and galloglass, for his masons, carpenters, and tailors being in his own work, but also for his sundry hunts, that is to say, twenty-four persons with sixty grey-hounds for deer hunting, another number of men and dogs to hunt the hare, and another number to hunt the martin, all at the charges of the king's subjects—meat, drink, and money.¹

But this was a charge merely made of rivalry, for it seems to have been the common custom of the Anglo-Irish nobles adopted no doubt from the practices of the native chieftains, who though they took no rent, for amongst them there was no such thing as tenure, yet took it out of them in other ways—living upon them in fact, doing them the honour of coshering with them, as they called visiting the inferior members of their clan, with their wives and families, including horses and horse-boys, and eating them out of house and home.

The earls of Kildare and Ossory followed the same practice of visiting their Irish equals, the O'Mores, the O'Connors, the O'Carrols, and others, putting up at their houses with their sons and daughters, all of them no doubt with good appetites, "*gens bien endentés*," their horses and grooms being quartered the while on the O'Mores' or the O'Carrols' dependants. To such an extent did they carry this jovial, social life, that, according to the report made to Henry VIII. on the state of Ireland, the earls of Kildare and Ossory with their wives and families and trains, lived half the year in the houses of the Irish gentry or at monasteries, which then stood in place of inns.²

It was of course part of this system that the hounds should be quartered on the neighbourhood, in like manner, when these nobles went a hunting and visited their Irish neighbours. And the earl of Kildare did it no less than the earl of Ossory, for we find in the report of the commissioners sent to inquire into the condition of Ireland in 1540, that when Kildare, Poer, or Ossory hunted, their dogs were supplied with bread and milk or butter.³ This, be it remembered, was shortly after the discovery of America, and before the introduction of the potato, and does not imply anything of waste or extravagance, as the like practice would at the present day.

But they had dogs for other hunts besides the deer, hare, and martin. Ireland from the earliest period abounded with wolves; and

¹ *State Papers, temp. Henry VIII.*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 121.

² *State Papers*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 185.

³ *State Papers*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 511, n.

the country was furnished with a peculiar race of wolf-dogs, celebrated through the world for size and courage; and we shall see a patent of Henry VIII.'s granting some of these dogs yearly to some of the grantees of Spain as a princely gift.¹ The gentry seem to have been peculiarly attached to their dogs of this race, of which there is curious evidence in an order of the commissioners for the affairs of Ireland during the Commonwealth, when the wolves had increased so alarmingly, in consequence of the desolations, that they were making prey of the orphans whose parents had perished in the wars or through famine. This order, which makes some provision, or rather solicits charity for the distressed Irish, describes "the great multitudes of poor swarming in all parts of the nation, occasioned by the devastations of the country, insomuch that frequently some are found starved in the highways, and many times poor children who lost their parents are found fed upon by ravening wolves."² At this sad period, the gentry had just laid down their arms and were embarking in great numbers for Spain, "forced from their pleasing fields and native home," and, as a solace in their misfortunes, seem to have resolved that "their faithful dogs should bear them company," which caused the issuing of the following order, made, it will be observed, in the castle of Kilkenny, the council being then on a tour in the provinces. It is headed—

DECLARATION AGAINST TRANSPORTING WOLF-DOGS.

For as much as we are credibly informed that wolves do much increase, and that some of the enemy's party who have laid down arms and have liberty to go beyond sea, and others, do attempt to carry away several such great dogs as are commonly called wolf-dogs, whereby the breed of them, which is useful for destroying of wolves, would, if not prevented, speedily decay. These are therefore to prohibit all persons from exporting any of the said dogs out of this Kingdom, and searchers and other officers of the Customs in the several ports and creeks of this dominion, are strictly required to seize and make stop of all such dogs, and deliver them either to the common huntsman appointed for the precinct where they are seized upon, or to the governor of the said precinct.—Dated at Kilkenny, 27th April, 1652.

There is less evidence of the extent to which falconry was practised by the Irish. It may be that the Irish gentry of Milesian race, one of whose peculiar features it was to despise all that bore the appearance of luxury and pomp,³ deemed this expensive pastime not worth the care and cost. But though this national trait may have kept the Irish from following the common custom of Europe, it is not to be supposed that the greater Anglo-Irish nobles, allied to the nobi-

¹ These would seem to have been the dogs that supplied Chaucer with his image of those that accompanied the king of Thrace on his entry into Thebes:—

Ten brace and more of greyhounds, snowy, fair,
And tall as stags, ran loose and coursed about
his chair,
A match for pards in flight, in grappling for the
bear."

see *Palamon and Arcite*, Dryden's version, book iii.

² Order of 12th May, 1653, quoted from the Council Book of the Commonwealth, by Hardiman in his edition of *Iar-Connaught*, p. 181.

³ Stanihurst *de Rebus Hibern.* A.D. 1532, preface.

lity of England and frequenters of the king's court, and therefore, familiar with the habits of the higher classes of English society, could have been without their hawking train. Accordingly, we find a statute passed in the reign of king Edward II., creating the penalty of forfeiture on those who much aggrieved the common people and wasted and destroyed their lands by sending men, horses, dogs, and birds to sojourn in their houses.¹ This country, indeed, was early celebrated for its hawks.

In Edward III.'s reign, we find his falconer William of Troyes sent over to Ireland to purchase for the king six gos-hawks and six tarsels; and on the same roll is an order on the treasury of Ireland to pay the cost of the birds, and the expenses of the falconer and his varlets during his stay in Ireland on the king's business.² The demand for them on the Continent of Europe induced such an export of them as rendered them scarce and dear at home to the prejudice of the Anglo-Irish nobles, who thereupon obtained restrictions to be put on the trade in them.

Thus in the tenth year of Richard II. (A.D. 1386), proclamation was ordered to be made at Drogheda against exporting any corn, falcons, hawks, or tarsels in ships to foreign parts (*Calendar of Pat. Rolls*, tenth year of Richard II., p. 136, art. 90). And in the first year of Henry IV. (A.D. 1400), searchers were appointed to seize any horses, arms, fish, corn, hawks, or tarsels or falcons attempted to be taken out of the land (*Id.* p. 159, art. 10). In which is to be observed the curious coupling of hawks and falcons with corn and fish, as if they had become necessities of life!

In spite of those prohibitions, which perhaps were only temporary, we have evidence by another Act of Parliament passed in 1480 (see 20th Edwd. IV., Ir. Stat.), that the great plenty of goshawks, falcons, and tarsels that had formerly been within the land of Ireland, to the great pleasure of the king, and other lords and gentlemen of his realm of England and of his land of Ireland, was reduced, "in-somuch that no hawks were there to be had to pleasure the king and his lords;" and a very heavy duty was thereby imposed upon the export of these birds. And finally, when Henry VIII. provided ordinances for the government of Ireland, on his extending his jurisdiction over those parts that had not before submitted to his sway, he ordained "that noe stranger of other realmes take nother horse ne hawke out of that lande, ne any other person convey any such horse or hawke from thens to any outward parties, except into Englande, without the Deputie's lycence, and not thither to the intent to sell the same, upon payne of forfeiture of the same horse and hawke, or the value of the same to the Kynges Deputie." (*State Papers*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 216). Hawks had at this time become one of the choicest presents that could be made out of Ireland. Thus, archbishop Allen, wishing

¹ Unpublished Stat., Exchequer Memor. Rolls.—Lynch's *Feudal Dignities*, p. 120.

² *Cal. of Patent Rolls*, 26th Feb., 32nd Edw. III., A.D. 1358.

to ingratiate himself with Cromwell lord privy seal to king Henry VIII., promises to send him in the following year a hawk, a hobby, and a Limerick mantle, these three things, he adds, being all the commodities for a gentleman's pleasure in these parts. In pursuance of this promise we find Skeffington, as deputy, writing to Cromwell that he was then sending up by a servant of his "from the Archbishop of Dublin to the King's Highness, a leash of gentil hawks, and a caste to your mastership."

In the same collection of state papers and correspondence there are two letters from the earl of Ossory, which strikingly exhibit how greatly these hawks were prized. In one he writes, "I doo send, at this tyme, three goshawkes, oon old and twoo younge hawkes; whereof I will that Maister Secretary doo chewse twoo hawkes, and that my Lord Chancellor have the thirde hawke, and," he adds, by way of caution, as if he feared lest some jealous acquaintance should take offence, "that as fewe knowe thereof, as ye may, and specially that my Lord of Wilshire know not thereof" (*State Papers*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 272). In the other the earl commissions his agents in London, the two Cowleys, to explain to Cromwell that one of O'More's sons while he (Ossory) was in Dublin, took a nest of hawks that he had bought in Leix of O'More to send to Cromwell, and had given them to the lord deputy, lord Leonard Grey; but at the same time directs him to state, that he had provided half a dozen nests to recompense his lordship for his own hawks that he had presented to the king in his (Ossory's) name last year, but that the year was so bad that they had failed and he had only one in mew (*State Papers*, vol. iii. part iii. p. 48). In like manner (*State Papers*, vol. iii. part iii. p. 222) the countess dowager of Ormonde sends the king two goshawks, and St. Leger a like number, which were kept back when some falcons and tarsel-gentles were sent, not knowing but that the king's proclamation against exporting goshawks prohibited it (*State Papers*, vol. iii. part iii. p. 527).

From the following curious entry on the Memoranda Rolls of the Irish exchequer, it would appear that this ordinance against the export of hawks was strictly observed, and that king Henry VIII. considered it matter of great favour to grant a suspension of it. The entry is as follows:—

To our Right Trusty, &c., Sir Anthony St. Leger, Knt. of our Order, Deputy of our Realm of Ireland, &c., and to our Trusty and Well-beloved Councillor, Sir Wm. Brabazon, Esq., Vicethesaurer of our Kingdom of Ireland, &c. We greete you well, letting you wit that upon instant sute made unto us by our Rt. Trustie and Rt. Entirely beloved Cosin the Duke of Albekirk, of Spayon, on behalf of the Marquis Desaria and his son, that it might like us to graunte unto the said Marquis and his said son and to the longer liver of them yearly out of that our Realm of Ireland two Goshawkes and four Greyhounds. For as much as the seyed Duke had doon unto us, in attendance upon our person in theis our warres, very acceptable pleasure and service, and for that we bee informed that the said Marquis bereth unto us especiall good wyll and affection, tenderyng, as well the contynnuance of the same, as the earnest request of the said Duke, whose daughter the said Marquis's sonne hath in marriage, We have been moved to graunt his suit in that behalf.

The writ proceeds to command the deputy to take order for the delivery of the said hawks and grey-hounds unto such persons as the said marquis and his son and the longer liver of them shall yearly, with their letter, address unto him for that purpose:—

And that our Treasurer for the time being shall, out of such treasure as shall from time to time come to your hands, content and pay the charges of buying the said hawks and greyhounds, &c. Given under our Signet att our Palais of Westminster, the 19th Dec. the 36th year of our Raigne (A.D. 1545).

In the council book of Edward VI. and Phillip and Mary, there are further applications of the marquis for his yearly demand of hawks and grey-hounds out of Ireland, but war breaking out between Spain and England in queen Elizabeth's reign, would, of course put a stop to all intercourse, and there is no notice of any further demand.

The office of grand falconer, which in England is a high hereditary office and enjoyed at this day by the duke of St. Alban's, seems never to have had any regular continuance in Ireland.

In the reign of king Henry IV. Sir Hugh Shirley was created by writ of privy seal dated at Westminster, 27th March, A.D. 1400, master of the falcons in Ireland for the term of his life, to be executed by himself or his sufficient deputy, receiving from the king the accustomed fee.¹ But from the absence of any other notice of the office, and from the tenor of the grant of the like office made in the reign of James I., it may be inferred that the office and its duties were almost unknown in Ireland.

In 1605, king James I. appointed Sir Jeffrey Fenton, then principal secretary for Ireland, to be master of the hawks and game of all sorts within that realm.² It is stated in the patent that many honours and estates are held of the king by the service of rendering of a falcon, eagle, gentle, goshawk, or tarsel of goshawk or other kind of hawk, and that lords or chieftains of territories had paid unto the king or his ancestors at the receipt of their exchequer, or unto the deputy or other governor-general of the kingdom, sundry hawks of the kinds aforesaid, of which hawks the king was for the most part defrauded through the negligence of his officers who ought to receive or demand the same. And that abuses were daily committed by engrossing of hawks of all sorts, by buying and selling of them and making common merchandize of them, and at times transporting them out of the kingdom to the disfurnishing of it, whereby the honourable personages in the realm and others attending the state are utterly disappointed of hawks and deprived of their recreation. For reformation "of these enormities" Sir Jeffrey is appointed to be receiver of rent hawks due to the king and his successors, and master of the hawks and game.

In illustration of this species of render for estates and honors it may be mentioned, that in the 8th year of Edward IV. (A.D. 1468),

¹ *Stemmata Shirleiana; or, the Annals of the Shirley Family*:—Privately printed

by Nichols, Westminster, 1841, 4to.

² *Liber Munerum Hiberniæ*, part ii. p. 91.

Robert Bold, Esq., was by patent created baron of Ratowth with the manor thereof, to hold to him and his heirs male, rendering yearly a gos-hawk for all service, &c.¹ And in the year 1218, Reginald Talbot was found seized of Dalkey rendering therefor a gos-hawk annually: and in 1369 his successor, Reginald Talbot, was sued in the court of exchequer for delivering therein as the rent of Dalkey one gos-hawk, which on inspection and examination there, proved unsound and of no value, and for this fraud he was fined.²

The following entry from the records of the court of exchequer at a somewhat later period shows that even in the reign of king James I. hawks were of importance enough to give rise to law-suits. The entry is from the rule books of the equity side of the court of exchequer.

Veneris xxi^o Aprilis, 1608.

Limerick—In the cause dependinge betweene the Lord Bourke and George Courtney pl^{ts} and Richard Gill, def^t, for an ariere of haukes whereas by bill of complaint the last assizes holden at Limericke before the Earle of Thomond, Sir Humfrey Winche, knight, Lo. Chiefe Barrone of this Excheq^r and Henry Gosnell esquire and others on the xvith daie of August last past, It was ordered by the assent of both parties that the Goushawke menc^oned in the said Bill of Complainte shall remaine still in the possession of the defend^t, and that the Caste of Tasseils should be put in deposito into the handes of the right hon^{ble} the Earle of Thomond, the said Earle having undertaken to restore to him to whome of right they shall be found by lawe to belonge, and the pl^{ts} to commence their suite the next Tearme in the Court of Excheq^r against the said def^t Gill for the title of the lands.³

But the sport of hawking was now declining; and the growing use of fowling-pieces and the rapid progress of the puritan spirit in this and the succeeding reign, probably put an end to falconry.

The last person who seems to have attempted the sport in Ireland was lord Strafforde; but from the ridicule he casts on the failure of his efforts, it is plain that the sport had already ceased to be a common pastime. In fact, the sport seems to have been as strange to the public, and not so successful, as the displays occasionally made in the Phoenix Park and on the Curragh of Kildare, some ten or fifteen years ago.

His correspondent, lord Cottington, seems to have detailed to him some very bad sport he had had in Wiltshire for lack of wood-pigeons; and this draws forth from lord Strafforde one of those characteristic sallies in the gailliard or courtly tone with which his correspondence abounds, indicative of his haughty and self-complacent spirit. His letter is from Dublin, and bears date the 24th November, 1633:—“Your Defeat of your Hawking sport in *Wiltshire* is nothing like to mine: For (as the Man you wot of said by the Pidgeons) here hath not been a Partridge in the Memory of Man, so as having a passing high-flying Tarsell, I am even setting him down, and To-morrow purpose with a cast or two of Spar-hawks to betake myself to fly at Black-Birds, ever and anon taking them on the Pate with a Trunk.

¹ Lynch's *Feudal Dignities*, p. 182.

² D'Alton's *History of the County of Dublin*, p. 888.

³ For these extracts from the exchequer

records the writer is indebted to his friend, James Frederick Ferguson, Esq., the keeper of those important muniments of the national history.

It is excellent Sport, there being sometimes two hundred Horse in the Field looking upon us, where the Lord of *Fonsail* drops out of Doors with a poor Falconer or two, and if Sir *Robert Wind* and *Gabriel Epsley*¹ be gotten along it is a Regale."²

To conclude, the following doggerel lines describing the hawks found in Ireland, are extracted from a very curious work by John Derrick, a servant of Sir Henry Sidney, giving an account of Ireland in the year 1578 in metre of the same doggerel character extending to over a thousand verses. His main object is to describe the habits of the kerne of Ulster, whose life he had observed during Sir Henry Sidney's war with O'Neill. It will be found in the first volume of the Somers' "Collection of Tracts." But first, one word about the gos-hawk, for which Ireland was chiefly celebrated. Falconers divided hawks into two classes—the long-winged and short-winged hawks. To the former belonged the falcon, and the falcon-gentle and others; to the latter the gos-hawk, which was the largest hawk used in falconry, except the ger-falcon, peculiarly the bird of kings and princes, and scarcely known in these countries. The falcon and the gos-hawk differed in their flight; the gos-hawk flew at the same level as its prey and struck at it by a side flight; the falcon mounted up above it and shot down perpendicularly, bringing down the prey with an extraordinary force to the ground, just as described in the scene at Pembroke before Henry II. The tassel, or tarsel, was simply the male of any hawk, so called from the French word *tiercelet*, derived from *tiers*, signifying third part, because (unlike the rest of creation) the males among hawks are less in size than the females, to the extent of a third part. Juliet's application of this term to Romeo is familiar to all—

O for a falconer's voice,
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!

The following are the lines from Derrick:—

Of Hawkes which retain sundry names,
The country store doth breed;
Whose names if patience will abide,
In order shall proceed.

The Goshawk, first of all the crew,
Deserves to have the name;
The Faucon next, for high attempts
In glorie and in fame.

The Tarsell then ensueth on,
Good reason 'tis that he
For flying hawks, in Ireland, next,
The Faucon placed should be.

The Tarsell-gentle's³ course is next,
The fourth peer of the land;
Combined to the Faucon with
A lover's friendly hand.

¹ Neighbours, apparently, of lord Strafforde in Yorkshire. — *Strafforde's Letters*, vol. i. p. 162.

² Earl of Strafforde to lord Cottington: ³ The male of the falcon-gentle, the best and boldest kind of falcon, somewhat less,

The prettie Marlion¹ is the fifth,
 To her the Sparhawke's next;
 And then the Jacke and Musket² last,
 By whom the birds are vext.

These are the hawks which chiefly breed
 In fertile Irish ground;
 Whose match for flight and speedie wing,
 Elsewhere be hardly found.

KILKENNY TRADESMEN'S TOKENS.

BY AQUILLA SMITH, ESQ., M.D., M.R.I.A.

THE subjoined list is forwarded in the hope of aiding the local archæologists in making further inquiries on the subject. The legend on the obverse is first given, with the bearing in the field between parentheses; then the legend and the bearing in the field of the reverse:—

1. EDWARD. ROTH. MARCHANT. (A stag trippant in front of a tree, the armorial bearing of Roth).
 IN. KILKENNY. 1663. (E. R. 1d.).
2. IOHN. BEAVOR. (the figure of a beaver).
 OF KILKENY. (I.B. 1d.).
3. RICHARD. INWOOD. (a wind-mill).
 [. . .] KILLKENY. (1d.).
4. RALPH. SKANLAN. (1d.).
 KILLKENY. 1656. (a swan).
5. IOHN. WHITTLE. IN. (arms of the Commonwealth of England).
 KILKENY. 1656. (1d.). Engraved in Willis' "Price Current" for 1853, p. 11.
6. LVCAS. WALE. OF. (a shield containing the arms of Wale).
 KILKENY. MERCHANT. (L.I.W. 1d.).
7. PETER. GOODIN. OF. (1d.).
 KILKENY. MARCHANT. (a fleur-de-lis).
8. THOMAS. DAVIS. KILKENY. (a lion's head).
 EXCISE. OFFIS. (1d.).
9. WILLIAM. KEOVGH. (1d.).
 KILKENY. GOLDSMITH. (a mermaid).

but much better, than the peregrine falcon. See Cotgrave's *French and English Dictionary*. A.D. 1610.

¹ Or merlin; a small sprightly hawk, called in French "es merillon," from which

we have the proverb, "as merry as a marlin;" in French—"joyeux comme un es merillon.—*Ib.*

² The tarsel, or male of the sparrow-hawk.—*Ib.*